

**Cullompton Swimming Pool Campaign**  
**Committee Meeting 42**  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014, Swimming Pool Shop**

Present: Dave Haslett (Chair + minutes), Lynne Read, Mary Christie, Camille Harrison, Roy Gould, Lynn Craddock, Kevin Hurford, Trevor Watkins

Apologies: Cat Margrie, Joyce Giffard, Merle Staddon

**1. Acceptance of previous minutes**

Unanimous.

**2. Updates and matters arising from previous minutes**

Roy has met with Neil Parish MP to discuss sports funding. Neil's office has been sending Roy a lot of information about this, which Roy is working his way through. Unfortunately much of the funding currently on offer is only available to schools. Neil suggested that funding might be available from Devon County Council, which Roy will follow up. Roy has spoken to James MacPherson. Although James's health is improving he does not feel ready to rejoin us yet. Roy will therefore discuss the results of his sports funding research with Dave when it has been completed.

**Action Point** – Roy to contact Devon County Council regarding potential funding.

**Action Point (brought forward)** – Dave to investigate a possible storage facility in Kentisbeare.

**Action Point (brought forward)** – Dave to design a leaflet about the campaign to go in the Town Team's folder for new residents moving into Cullompton.

Dave will be placing an order for 25 new T-shirts this week.

**3. Feedback from visit to Devonshire Homes**

Dave, Lynne and Roy attended a meeting with Devonshire Homes' managing director Steve Russell. Steve confirmed that they will be making a substantial donation to the swimming pool fund as part of their community contribution in respect of the old Cummings Nursery site in Honiton Road/Culm Lea.

He will send us a written promise once it has been agreed by their solicitor. He will then arrange some publicity, which will benefit both them and us. We said we would see if we could get our patron Sharron Davies to take part in the publicity, once we knew when it would be happening.

Work on clearing the site and building the new houses is expected to start in September or October this year, and 70 houses are planned. The actual donation will be made when the 35<sup>th</sup> house is completed, which is expected to be mid-2016.

## **4. Fundraising**

### Tesco collection day (Sat 5<sup>th</sup> April)

A rota was agreed, and we made arrangements to transport the display materials, leaflets and collecting buckets.

### Auction of Promises (Tues 8<sup>th</sup> April)

Lynne has looked at Mary's record of what happened between ourselves and the Community Centre, and decided that no further action needs to be taken. We (and particularly Mary) were not in any way at fault.

The auction has been confirmed for 8<sup>th</sup> April and will be held at the Market House Inn, with all proceeds going to the swimming pool fund. All donors have been informed of this and are happy with the new arrangements.

The Market House will provide the venue (their new sports bar) free of charge and Anita will also lay on free chips and sandwiches as her contribution to the event.

Dave has produced a poster, which has been distributed, and a catalogue that is available from our shop and the Market House. The event has also been advertised online and on the advertising screens in the Market House, and was featured in this week's Gazette. We are accepting postal bids from those who can't attend the auction, and some have already been received.

Lynne is following up some last-minute promises which didn't make it into the catalogue but will be featured as additional items at the end of the auction. There was some confusion as two people were offering driving lessons and they seem to have got mixed up. Dave has the correct details and will send them to Lynne.

Any items that do not reach their reserve prices (which Dave and Lynne will decide on) will be held back for a coffee morning, where we will hold a silent auction. This will be held in the Baptist Church hall on a Saturday morning to coincide with a Farmers Market day. We could also charge people £5 to have their own stall there, which should cover the cost of hiring the hall.

### Fashionable Fundraising (Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> May)

Promotional stall: Dave and Roy

Jewellery stall: Meryle

Selling draw tickets: Lynne R and Kevin

Stewards: Mary, Lynn C, Maureen

Final arrangements will be agreed at our next meeting.

The event organiser, Annie Ford, has issued a comprehensive timetable for the whole event, which Mary has circulated by email.

A dress rehearsal will be held at 7.30pm on Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> April at the Community Centre when we can go along and find out where everything will be.

### Cullompton Town Fair (Sun 29<sup>th</sup> June)

Lynne has sent in our registration form and reserved 2 stalls. They have asked for measurements of our stall/float and a copy of our insurance details, which she will send them.

### Craft, Art and Flower Festival (July)

Mary is creating a swimming pool out of blue and white lobelia with help from Turnpike Nurseries who have kindly donated the plants.

### Carnival float

Roy has compiled a list of local fêtes that we could attend:

Uffculme: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May (bank holiday) – £35 per stall

Willand: Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June

Broadclyst: Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June (?)

Cullompton Town Fair: Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June

Culmstock: Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July

Hemyock: Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July

Kentisbeare: Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July

Silverton Street Fair: Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August

Plymtree: Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August (bank holiday)

The trailer we were going to use for the float is no longer available, but the one that was used by Devon Air Ambulance is now available. Roy said he would be able to tow it to the fêtes himself, which will be more convenient.

The main purpose of the float will be to promote the campaign to people outside of Cullompton and to try to engage their interest and support. Hopefully this will lead to us being invited back to give presentations to their parish councils and other interested groups, and might also generate support from the schools that have not yet responded to our letters.

**Action Point** – Dave, Roy, Mary and Cat to arrange a meeting to discuss the float.

**Action Point (brought forward)** – Dave and Kevin to talk to Nick Savage regarding possible alternative routes for the sponsored walk.

## 5. Survey

We have now started taking the survey door-to-door.

The first page of the survey must be left with the householder as it includes an advert for the Sports Centre who paid the cost of printing the survey forms.

Some customers have taken forms from the shop and have been posting them through our letterbox. Lynne said no further forms should be given out; customers should only be told that we will be visiting them. They can also be invited to help us with the survey or help in the shop. A small number of people have said they will help with the survey. The Woodmill Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit is also helping.

Lynne has the survey forms and the map with the routes. These need to be put somewhere in the shop where people can access them easily.

Completed forms should be given to Dave, Camille or Nikki Woollatt, who will enter them into the online survey. Dave emphasised that the forms must be clearly marked after this had been done, so there was no duplication.

Lynne has asked Michael Speirs if the Town Council could help us carry out the survey, but she has

not yet received a response.

## **6. CCA Link and charitable status**

Dave and Lynne reported that they were unhappy with our current link with the CCA, as it is not the arrangement that we signed up to.

Their new Chairperson is focusing on the CCA fields only, whereas their previous Chairperson wanted to bring the whole community together under one umbrella. The members of the current CCA Council have told Lynne they can see no reason why we should be a part of them. (It is important to note that *they* invited *us* to join them.)

One of the main reasons why we agreed to join them was because they offered to help us with the campaign. But several of those who offered help left the CCA shortly after we joined, and no help was ever given.

In the agreement we signed with them, they also said they would carry out an “occasional inspection” of our accounts, but their new Treasurer has found out that under Charity Commission rules our accounts must be fully integrated with theirs. Although the money is ring-fenced, this is not what we agreed to. It has also caused the CCA problems with the Charity Commission, as the limit on the amount of money they are allowed to hold has been exceeded. This situation will only get worse as we raise more funds.

Unfortunately integrating our accounts with theirs meant that the accountant’s fee to audit this year’s CCA accounts was £360 instead of the £110 they budgeted for. The CCA therefore wants us to pay £260 of the accountant’s fee, which we have no choice but to pay.

The only thing we have gained from becoming a section of the CCA is the use of their charity number, and the only thing we have used that for is the electricity supplier for the shop. It probably also helped that we were a registered charity when we asked Sharron Davies to become our patron. Roy has said previously that it would be easier to apply for grants if we had our own charity number rather than sharing theirs.

So our plan over the next few months is to look at becoming a registered charity in our own right and then separate from the CCA. It is important that we do not end up having the same problem as the CCA and exceeding the amount of money the Charity Commission allows us to hold. This will need to be looked into. We will also need to think about having trustees.

**Action Point** – Roy to look into getting Registered Charity status.

The CCA’s AGM is on Weds 7<sup>th</sup> May, 7pm at the Hayridge. Dave and Lynne will be attending, but anyone else can come along too as it is a public meeting.

## **7. Shop update and 6-month review**

As the new shop has now been running for a full 6 months, Dave proposed that we should review all aspects of it to see if anything could be improved. We are not currently achieving the level of takings we anticipated, based on other charity shops in Cullompton whose figures have been published in the local press.

Trevor refused to take part in the review and left the meeting, saying there was no way that takings could be improved. He resigned as shop manager, and from the committee, in an email sent to Dave

the following day.

The main aspects which need to be considered are:

- (a) How can we match (or beat) the takings of the other charity shops in Cullompton?
- (b) How can we make the best use of the available floor space?
- (b) How can we find and retain more volunteers?
- (d) How can we get more stock and ensure it is of good quality?
- (e) How can we keep customers happy and make sure they keep coming back?

Dave carried out a brief survey before the meeting to find out what customers thought of the shop as it stands at the moment. He reported that customers are most concerned about the following issues:

- (a) many of the items displayed in the window are not actually for sale
- (b) the shop looks empty/uninviting when they look beyond the window display from outside
- (c) the stock is not being refreshed as often as they would like
- (d) they do not like the revised clothing section – not enough of it and they miss the £1 sale rail
- (e) staff do not wear name badges and do not appear to be fully occupied
- (f) the counter looks untidy and there is no till

Most of these issues should be fairly simple to fix and will create a more professional environment, which will hopefully lead to an increase in customers and takings. When we took on the new shop we agreed that we would get a till and upgrade the shop fittings if we stayed for more than 6 months (which we are doing), so we now need to look at these things.

### Discussion

Lynn said she felt that customers liked the new shop layout as there was a lot more space, pushchairs and wheelchairs could get in easily, there was room to put the recycling bags ready for collection, and there was room to display larger items of furniture if we get any. Dave felt that the feeling of space could still be retained but the layout could be made more attractive, particularly when viewed through the window.

The quality of donations we receive needs to be addressed. A lot of it cannot be sold as it is broken. We receive a lot of glassware that hardly ever sells. We also need to look at ways of increasing the amount of donations we receive, as if we cleared out everything from the shop that had been there for over a month there would be hardly anything left on the shelves.

Mary thought the clothing section could be improved with better, sturdier clothes rails and proper size tags, as clothing was one of the main things that drew people into the shop. Although they didn't buy many of the clothes, once they were in the shop they spent money on books and bric-a-brac.

Lynne emphasised that the entire weight of any display must go through the floor not the walls. Camille thought that a free-standing circular clothes rail with space to display other items on top would be a good idea.

Customers are very happy with our book display and like the low prices, although many of them don't see the price labels and have to ask how much the books cost.

The counter is too big, unattractive, and the drawer keeps falling out. We should also think about repositioning it so it doesn't stick out into the shop so much.

We need a space to store donations as they come in so they don't pile up and make the shop look untidy.

Lynne said her husband Pat had offered to build more of the green shelving units, replace the changing room curtain rail, and do anything else that needed doing.

Several of the volunteers seem to have drifted away and no longer put their names on the rota. We need to try to get them back, as we have been relying almost entirely on Trevor and Lynn to keep the shop open. Lynne said she and Pat could do a full day between them each week. Kevin offered to do Saturdays.

Mary suggested that everyone should come to the next meeting with an idea of something different that we could sell in the shop – perhaps something unique that they could make. This would make our shop stand out from the other charity shops. Ideally it would be something relating to swimming, water sports or the colour blue.

**Action Point** – everyone to bring their ideas to the next meeting.

As everyone had plenty of thoughts about what could be done to improve the shop, we will explore these ideas further at our next meeting and make a formal plan.

## **8. Accounts update**

Camille reported that the new shop had made a profit of £3,500 in its first 6 months.

She is amalgamating all our separate bank accounts into a single one.

### **Cullompton Town Council grants**

The Town Council has issued its annual invitation to local groups to apply for grants (typically around £200). We agreed that we would apply, and made a wish-list of items we needed, including a till, better clothing rails and size tags, a card stand and a gazebo.

**Action Point** – Camille to obtain prices for these items and submit the application.

## **9. Any other business**

The Annual Parish Meeting is on Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> May, 7pm at the Town Hall. We made some useful contacts at last year's event so it should be well worth attending again.

Gareth Salter would like to run a tombola stall at car boot sales and donate a percentage of his profits to us. He would like us to supply a poster and collecting tin for his stall.

**Action Point** – Lynne to contact Gareth and supply him with what he needs.

**Action Point** – Dave to contact Samantha Muxworthy to find out about the car boot sales the Football Club were going to run over the summer.

**Action Point** – Lynne to contact Padbrook Park to find out about the current situation there.

## **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 6.30pm at Lynne's house.